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# **BULLET HOSES**

## **SEMIAUTOMATIC ASSAULT WEAPONS**



**What Are They? What's So Bad About Them?**

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**Violence Policy Center**

**EXHIBIT E (Klarevas)**

**The Violence Policy Center (VPC)** is a national non-profit educational organization that conducts research and public education on firearms violence and provides information and analysis to policymakers, journalists, advocates, and the general public. The Center examines the role of firearms in America, analyzes trends and patterns in firearms violence, and works to develop policies to reduce gun-related death and injury.

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This study was funded in part with the support of The David Bohnett Foundation, The California Wellness Foundation, The George Gund Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and The Streisand Foundation. Past studies released by the VPC include:

- *"Officer Down"—Assault Weapons and the War on Law Enforcement* (May 2003)
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- *Guns For Felons: How the NRA Works to Rearm Criminals* (March 2000)
- *One Shot, One Kill: Civilian Sales of Military Sniper Rifles* (May 1999)
- *Cease Fire: A Comprehensive Strategy to Reduce Firearms Violence* (Revised, October 1997)

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## **TEN KEY POINTS ABOUT WHAT ASSAULT WEAPONS ARE AND WHY THEY ARE SO DEADLY**

This study documents the following 10 important key points on the pages noted.

**1. Semiautomatic assault weapons (like AK and AR-15 assault rifles and UZI and MAC assault pistols) are civilian versions of military assault weapons.** There are virtually no significant differences between them. (Page 1)

**2. Military assault weapons are “machine guns.”** That is, they are capable of fully automatic fire. A machine gun will continue to fire as long as the trigger is held down until the ammunition magazine is empty. (Page 1)

**3. Civilian assault weapons are not machine guns.** They are semiautomatic weapons. (Since 1986 federal law has banned the sale to civilians of new machine guns.) The trigger of a semiautomatic weapon must be pulled separately for each round fired. It is a mistake to call civilian assault weapons “automatic weapons” or “machine guns.” (Page 1)

**4. However, *this is a distinction without a difference in terms of killing power.*** Civilian semiautomatic assault weapons incorporate all of the functional design features that make assault weapons so deadly. They are arguably more deadly than military versions, because most experts agree that semiautomatic fire is more accurate—and thus more lethal—than automatic fire. (Pages 1, 5-6, 11-14)

**5. The distinctive “look” of assault weapons is not cosmetic. It is the visual result of specific functional design decisions.** Military assault weapons were designed and developed for a specific military purpose—*laying down a high volume of fire over a wide killing zone*, also known as “hosing down” an area. (Pages 2-6)

**6. Civilian assault weapons keep the specific functional design features that make this deadly spray-firing easy.** These functional features also distinguish assault weapons from traditional sporting guns. (Pages 5-10)

**7. The most significant assault weapon functional design features are: (1) ability to accept a high-capacity ammunition magazine, (2) a rear pistol or thumb-hole grip, and, (3) a forward grip or barrel shroud.** Taken together, these are the design features that make possible the deadly and indiscriminate “spray-firing” for which assault weapons are designed. None of them are features of true hunting or sporting guns. (Pages 5-6)

**8. “Spray-firing” from the hip, a widely recognized technique for the use of assault weapons in certain combat situations, has no place in civil society.** Although assault weapon advocates claim that “spray-firing” and shooting from the hip with such weapons is never done, numerous sources (including photographs and diagrams)

show how the functional design features of assault weapons are used specifically for this purpose. (Pages 12-14)

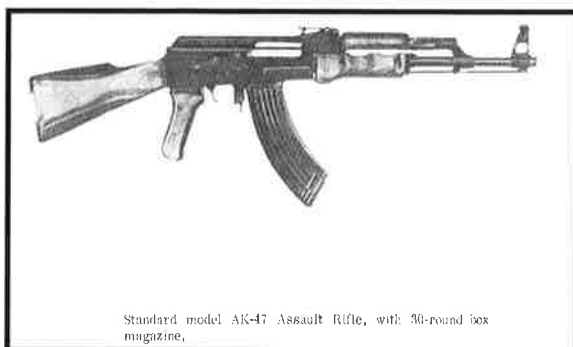
**9. Unfortunately, most of the design features listed in the 1994 federal ban—such as bayonet mounts, grenade launchers, threaded barrels, and flash suppressors—have nothing to do with why assault weapons are so deadly. As a result, the gun industry has easily evaded the ban by simply tinkering with these “bells and whistles” while keeping the functional design features listed above. (Page 14)**

**10. Although the gun lobby today argues that there is no such thing as civilian assault weapons, the gun industry, the National Rifle Association, gun magazines, and others in the gun lobby enthusiastically described these civilian versions as “assault rifles,” “assault pistols,” “assault-type,” and “military assault” weapons to boost civilian assault-weapon sales throughout the 1980s. The industry and its allies only began to use the semantic argument that a “true” assault weapon is a machine gun after civilian assault weapons turned up in inordinate numbers in the hands of drug traffickers, criminal gangs, mass murderers, and other dangerous criminals. (Pages 14-16)**


## WHAT IS A SEMIAUTOMATIC ASSAULT WEAPON?

Semiautomatic assault weapons are civilian versions of automatic military assault rifles (like the AK-47 and the M-16) and automatic military assault pistols (like the UZI).

### Assault Weapons



**Military AK-47  
Assault Rifle**



**SILE** DIRECT FROM CHINA  
AKM-47/S RIFLE

AVAILABLE IN  
7.62 x 39 AND 5.56  
STRAIGHT OR FOLDING STOCK

THE GUN THAT HAS SEEN MORE SERVICE  
USE THAN ANY OTHER RIFLE IN THE WORLD AND IS STILL IN USE TODAY.  
SEE YOUR DEALER FOR FURTHER INFORMATION  
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**SILE INC.** IMPORTER OF FINE FIREARMS  
7 CENTRE MARKET PLACE, NEW YORK, NY 10013  
TELEPHONE 212/925-4111

84 GUNS & AMMO/DECEMBER 1985

**Civilian AK-47  
Assault Rifle**

These guns look the same because they are virtually identical, save for one feature: military assault rifles (like the rifle on the left above) are machine guns. A machine gun fires continuously as long as its trigger is held back—until it runs out of ammunition. Civilian assault rifles (like the gun on the right) are *semi*-automatic weapons. The trigger of a semiautomatic weapon must be pulled back separately for each round fired.

Because federal law has banned the sale of new machine guns to civilians since 1986,<sup>a</sup> and heavily regulates sales to civilians of older model machine guns, there is virtually no civilian market for military assault weapons. The gun industry introduced semiautomatic versions of military assault weapons in order to create and exploit new civilian markets for these deadly weapons. The next section explains why civilian semiautomatic assault weapons are no less deadly than military automatic assault weapons. In fact, they are arguably even more deadly.

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<sup>a</sup> See, 18 U.S. Code, Section 922(o).

## **WHAT'S SO BAD ABOUT SEMIAUTOMATIC ASSAULT WEAPONS?**

Assault weapons did not “just happen.” They were developed to meet specific combat needs. All assault weapons—military and civilian alike—incorporate specific features that were designed to provide a specific military combat function. That military function is *laying down a high volume of fire over a wide killing zone*, also known as “hosing down” an area. Civilian assault weapons keep the specific design features that make this deadly spray-firing easy. These features also distinguish assault weapons from traditional sporting firearms.

### **Assault Weapon Design Follows Specific Combat Function**

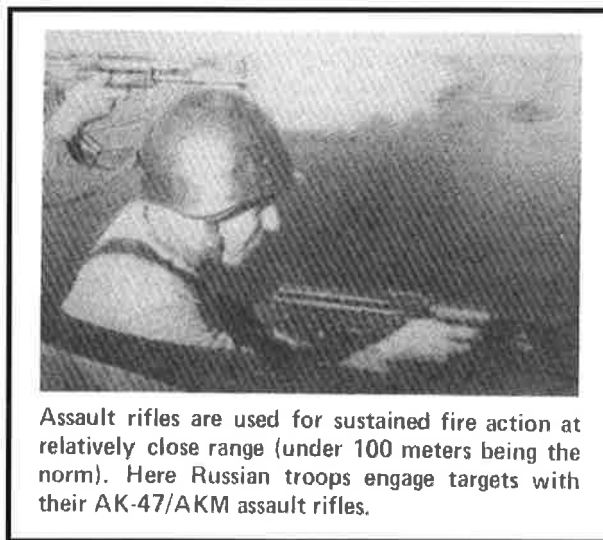


Illustration and caption from Chuck Taylor, *The Fighting Rifle: A Complete Study of the Rifle in Combat* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1984): 166.

The distinctive “look” of assault weapons is not merely “cosmetic,” as the gun lobby often argues—the assault weapon’s appearance is the result of the design of the gun following its function. A brief summary of how assault weapons came into being makes clear the reason for, and the nature of, their distinctive design features.



**The problem of trench warfare.** The roots of military assault weapons lie in the trench fighting of the First World War. The standard infantry weapon of that conflict was the long-range battle rifle. "Infantrymen in most armies were equipped with high-powered rifles: long, unwieldy, but accurate to ranges of 1,000 m (3,280 ft) or more. But a long weapon was a definite handicap in the close-quarter fighting of the trenches, and long-range capability was wasted when combat usually took place at ranges of tens of metres or less."<sup>1</sup>

Right—Troops in a World War I trench, fixing bayonets on battle rifles. Below—Springfield Model 1903, the U.S. Army's main battle rifle in World War I.



**Submachine guns—the intermediate step.** When armies bogged down in the World War I trenches, weapons designers looked for ways to break the bloody stalemate. Among them was the submachine gun, designed to be a "compact, fast-firing, short-range weapon" for use in the trenches and by highly mobile storm troops in new tactical formations.<sup>2</sup> According to the *Illustrated Book of Guns*, "A submachine gun (SMG) is a close-range, automatic weapon, firing pistol cartridges (e.g., 9mm Parabellum), and is compact, easy to carry, and light enough to be fired from either the shoulder or the hip."<sup>3</sup>

Among some famous American submachine guns are the more finely machined Thompson, or "Tommy Gun," shown on the right in the hands of British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and its successor, the mass-produced M3 "Grease Gun," shown below. Both are chambered in .45ACP, a pistol cartridge.



***The final step—the first assault rifle.*** The last step in the evolution of the military assault rifle came during the Second World War. It grew out of the German military's pre-war interest in "obtaining a relatively high-power intermediate or mid-range cartridge *and corresponding weapon* for infantry application."<sup>4</sup> (Emphasis added). On the one hand, the submachine gun was useful in close-range fighting, but the pistol cartridge it fired (typically 9mm) lacked power and range. On the other, German military thinkers realized that the battle rifle was too much gun for modern combat scenarios: "Since most infantry action took place at ranges under 400 meters, the long-range potential of the standard cartridge and service rifle were actually wasted."<sup>5</sup> There were also logistical problems in supplying armies in the field with different kinds of rounds of ammunition: the larger rifle cartridges for the battle rifle and the smaller pistol cartridges for the submachine guns.<sup>6</sup>



German MP-40 9mm submachine at left, and Mauser Karabiner 98k battle rifle below. Both guns shown in the field with French Nazi soldiers at right.



The solution to these logistical and firepower problems practically suggested itself:

Logically, it was inescapable that sooner or later someone would consider a compromise between the long range, powerful, rifle and the rapid fire, but short range, submachine gun. During their Operation Barbarossa (Russian) campaign and elsewhere, the Germans were continually reminded of the ever-increasing need for a rapid fire arm that was small enough to be convenient to hand carry, but at the same time possessed sufficient range and power to be adequate out to about 200 meters.<sup>7</sup>

The result of German research and development was that very compromise. It came in the form of the STG (*Sturmgewehr*) ("storm gun") 44, the "father of all assault rifles....After the war it was examined and dissected by almost every major gunmaking nation and led, in one way and another, to the present-day 5.56mm assault rifles."<sup>8</sup>



### **THE "FATHER OF ALL ASSAULT RIFLES"**



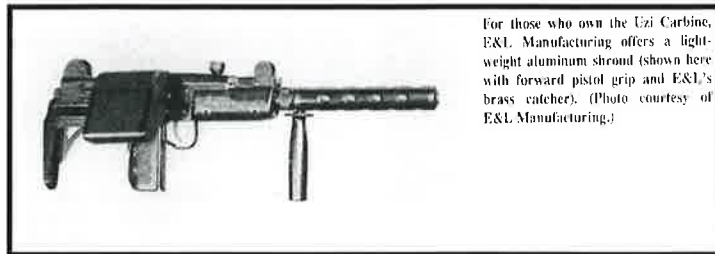
Above, the Nazi army's Sturmgewehr (STG) 44, the first assault rifle.  
Below, the STG 44 in combat action.

**Deadly designs.** One thing leaps out from these pictures: the remarkable similarity of the first assault rifle to the assault rifles currently flooding America's streets. This family resemblance is not a coincidence. From the STG-44 "storm gun" to the Bushmaster XM-15, assault weapons have incorporated into their design *specific* features that enable shooters to spray ("hose down") a large number of bullets over a broad killing zone, without having to aim at each individual target. These features not only give assault weapons a distinctive appearance, they make it easy to simply point the gun while rapidly pulling the trigger—including firing from the hip, a procedure seldom used in hunting anything but human beings. The most important of these design features are:



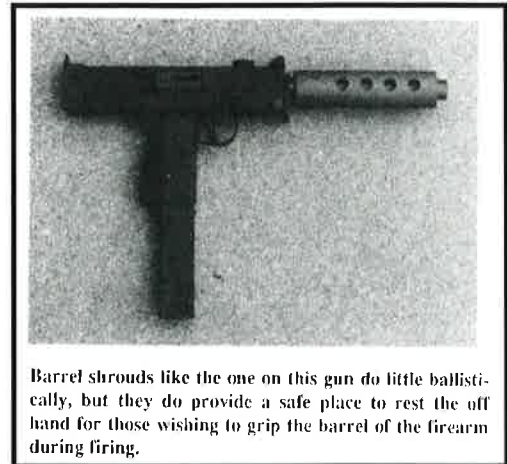
- o **"High-capacity," detachable ammunition magazines** (often called "clips") that hold as many as 75 rounds of ammunition. "This allows the high volume of fire critical to the 'storm gun' concept."<sup>9</sup>
- o **A rear pistol grip** (handle), including so-called "thumb-hole stocks" and magazines that function like pistol grips.
- o **A forward grip or barrel shroud.** Forward grips (located under the barrel or the forward stock) "give a shooter greater control over a weapon during recoil."<sup>10</sup> Forward grips and barrel shrouds also make it possible to hold the gun with the non-trigger hand, even though the barrel gets extremely hot from firing multiple rounds. In the case of assault pistols

(like the UZI, MAC, and Intratec TEC series) the forward grip often appears as an ammunition magazine or a barrel shroud, a vented tube surrounding the gun barrel.



For those who own the Uzi Carbine, E&L Manufacturing offers a light-weight aluminum shroud (shown here with forward pistol grip and E&L's brass catcher). (Photo courtesy of E&L Manufacturing.)

**Barrel shrouds make it possible to hold a hot barrel during firing (right). Forward pistol grips help control recoil (above). Images and captions from Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three*.<sup>11</sup>**

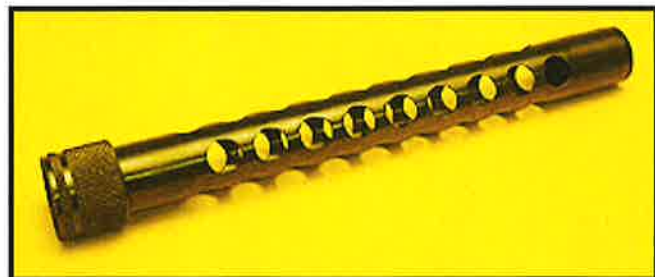


Barrel shrouds like the one on this gun do little ballistically, but they do provide a safe place to rest the off hand for those wishing to grip the barrel of the firearm during firing.



**Military assault rifles, like this Heckler & Koch G41 invariably accept a high-capacity magazine ("clip") and have some form of pistol grip and fore-end grip.**

**Barrel shrouds, like the one on the right sold by Bushmaster Firearms for use on the UZI, are "ventilated all around for maximum heat dissipation."**



These design features create the ability to quickly lay down a high volume of fire, making semiautomatic assault weapons a particularly dangerous addition to the civilian gun market. They explain why assault weapons are favored by terrorists, mass killers, and violent criminals, and they distinguish such weapons from true hunting and target guns.

## MODERN DESCENDANTS OF THE STG-44 ON AMERICA'S STREETS

Most of the assault weapons sold on America's civilian market are semiautomatic descendants of the STG-44. Here are a few of the more popular and notorious.

**Kalashnikov AK-47 and its variants.** The Soviet Army's AK-47 was derived from the STG-44 shortly after the Second World War, boosted by material and personnel that fell into Soviet hands when the Red Army overran German research and engineering facilities.<sup>12</sup> The AK-47 (in many variants, like the AKM) has become, since the 1940s, the most widely-distributed rifle in the world.<sup>13</sup> According to *The Gun Digest Book of Assault Weapons*:

"The AKM was the revolutionary weapon of the 1960s and '70s, used by everyone from the Viet Cong to the Palestine Liberation fighters. Its comparatively short length and light weight made war more available to Third World women and children, probably not an advance for civilization."<sup>14</sup>



Above: AK-47, foreground, AKM, upper right background.

China exported few guns to the United States before the 1980s. But, beginning in 1987, Chinese rifle imports—mostly semi-automatic versions of the AK-47—surged. The flood of Chinese rifles reached 64 percent of all rifles imported into the United States in 1993 and was only cut off by the administration of former President Bill Clinton. (See table at right.)<sup>15</sup>

China accounted for forty-two percent of all rifles imported into the U.S. civilian market between 1987 and 1994, the year in which President Clinton finally blocked the Chinese gun dumping (see Table 8).

Table 8

Rifle Imports from China to the United States, 1987 - 1994

	<i>Total Rifles Imported</i>	<i>Chinese Rifles Imported</i>	<i>Percent Chinese</i>
1987	452,059	100,897	22%
1988	484,976	182,935	38%
1989	350,012	141,382	40%
1990	273,102	31,370	11%
1991	339,966	115,902	34%
1992	420,085	164,271	39%
1993	764,498	490,399	64%
1994	698,907	344,648	49%
Total	3,783,605	1,571,804	42%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division

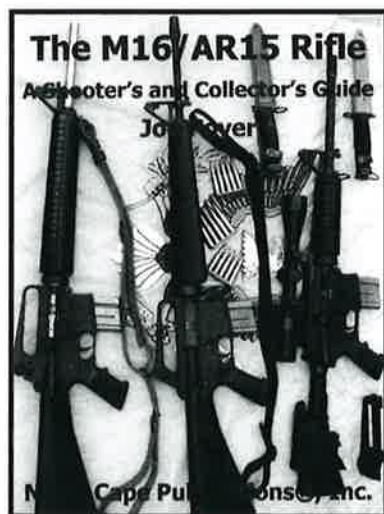
**AR-15 Variant of the M-16.** The U.S. Army's decision in the 1960s to replace its M-14 battle rifle with the M-16 assault rifle was based on reasoning similar to the German army's and highly revealing of the function of assault weapons. After studying over three million casualty reports from World Wars I and II, and data from the Korean War, the Army's Operations Research Office (ORO) found that, "in the overall picture, aimed fire did not seem to have any more important role in creating casualties than randomly fired shots. Marksmanship was not as important as volume. Fire was seldom effectively used beyond 300 meters due to terrain...and [ORO] discovered that most kills occur at 100 meters or less. From this data, ORO concluded that what the Army needed was a low recoil weapon firing a number of small projectiles....The [Armalite] AR-15 was chosen as the best small caliber weapon and it was adopted as the M16."<sup>16</sup>

The U.S. Army adopted the M-16 assault rifle, right, in the 1960s. It saw extensive service during the Vietnam War.

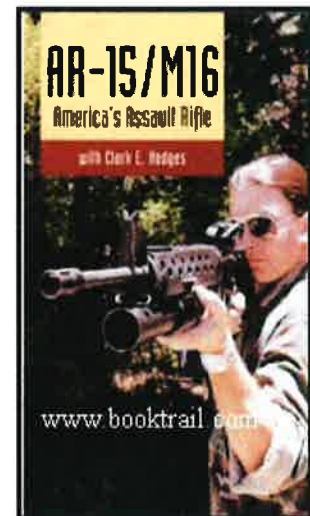


Another expert's explanation of the Army's reasoning sheds light on one of the principal dangers of assault weapons on civilian streets—"spray and pray" firing:

The studies showed that...in spite of the huge amounts of money spent by the military services in training combat infantrymen to be marksmen, few were capable of firing effectively beyond ranges of 200 to 300 meters in the heat of battle. "Spray and pray" would come to be the practice on the future battlefields of Vietnam.<sup>17</sup>



Books like these two illustrate that there is virtually no difference between the military M-16 and the civilian AR-15, the latter being only slightly modified for sale in the civilian market. The titles themselves show the popular equivalence.





The gun industry was quick to begin churning out civilian versions of the M-16, labeling the semiautomatic models the “AR-15,” not coincidentally the same name as the prototype version of the military assault rifle.

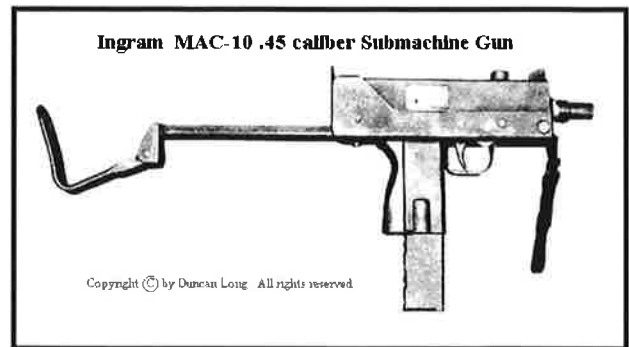
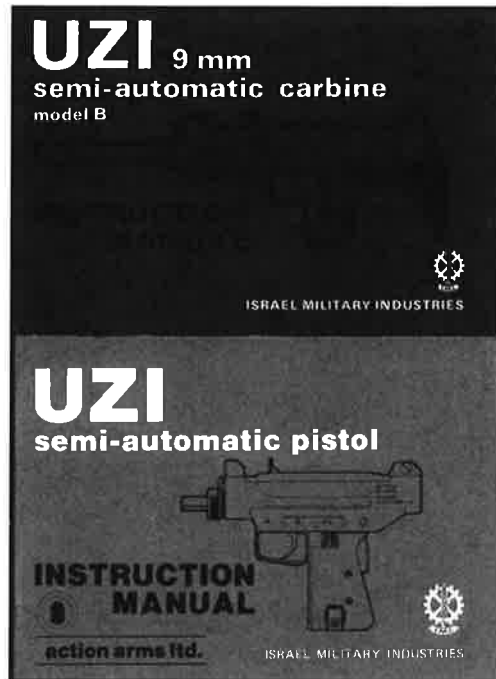


Bushmaster’s version of the AR-15, left, achieved new heights of notoriety in 2002 when it was revealed that one model was the weapon used by the infamous Washington, DC-area snipers.

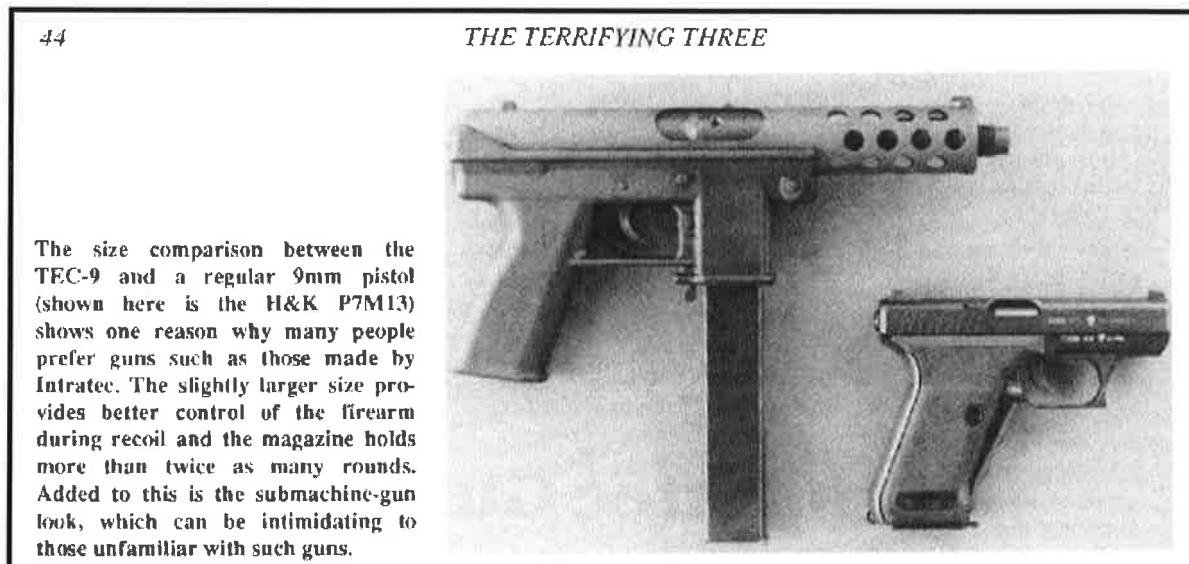
**Assault Pistols—UZI, Ingram, Intratec, and More.** A particularly deadly variant in the gun industry’s marketing program has been the sale of civilian assault pistols, which are for the most part simply semiautomatic versions of submachine guns. Firearms expert Duncan Long explained the marketing basis of this trend in his book *The Terrifying Three: Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families*:

As the militaries of the world increasingly rely on assault rifles to fill the submachine gun role, making money on a new submachine gun design becomes harder and harder. Consequently, a number of companies have tried to capture the police and civilian markets....Citizens purchasing firearms for everything from plinking to self-defense have provided a lucrative market, especially in the United States. Those weapons produced for the civilian market are generally semiauto versions of the automatic weapons, often modified slightly to conform to U.S. firearms laws.<sup>18</sup>





Lagging sales to the military spurred the gun industry to market to civilians semiautomatic versions of assault pistols such as the UZI and Ingram MAC series. Assault pistols like these quickly became the preferred weapon for criminal gangs, fringe groups like militias, and mass murderers.

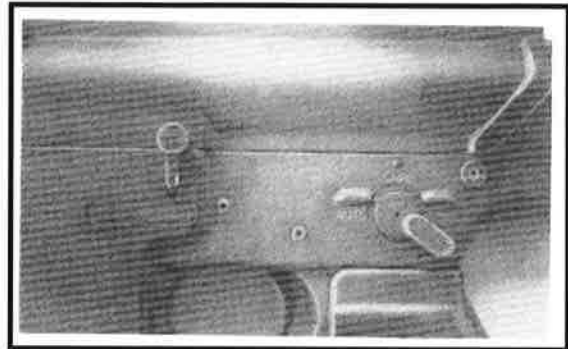


Firearms expert Duncan Long has succinctly summarized the perverse attractions of semiautomatic assault pistols like the Intratec TEC-9 shown above. (Image and caption from Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three*.)<sup>19</sup>

## THE GUN INDUSTRY'S LIES

The gun industry—aided by its apologists in the gun lobby, the NRA, and the gun press—has tried to divert attention from the inevitable consequences of its cynical marketing of these killing machines, and thwart regulation. This has been done by inventing what can only be fairly described as a series of lies and deceptions about assault weapons and their effects. Some of the more prominent among them are discussed below.

***Is “automatic fire” an essential feature of a “real” assault weapon?*** The answer is, “absolutely not.” But that hasn’t kept the gun industry from using this line of argument to pretend that civilian assault weapons simply don’t exist. The red herring of the automatic fire “issue” was raised by the gun lobby only after civilian assault weapons were widely criticized. This criticism came after mass murderers and drug traffickers began to “hose down” America’s streets and schoolyards with civilian assault weapons.



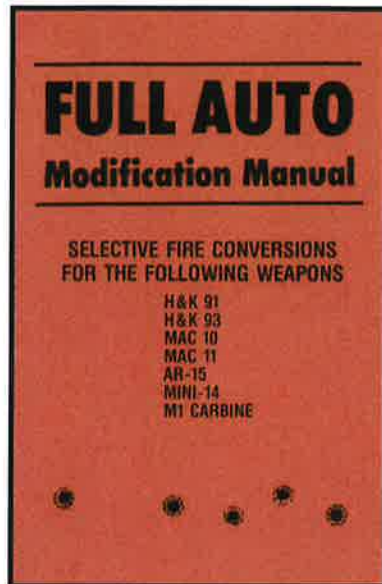
**Military assault weapons, like the M-16 shown above, have a “selective fire” switch to change the mode of fire from semiautomatic to automatic (machine gun).**

This argument is entirely semantic. By limiting the “definition” of assault weapon to military machine guns, the gun industry and its friends hope to define away the problem. But, fully automatic fire has little to do with the killing power of assault weapons. As the leading pro-assault weapons expert Duncan Long wrote in his 1986 publication, *Assault Pistols, Rifles and Submachine Guns*:

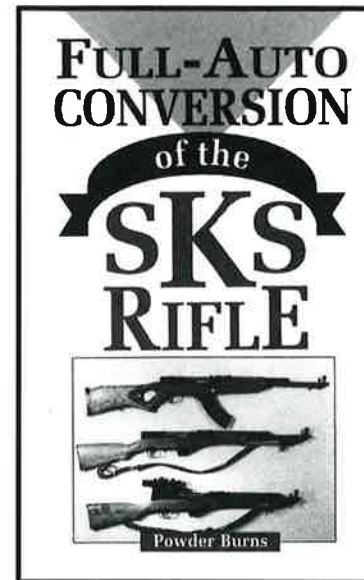
The next problem arises if you make a semiauto-only model of one of these selective-fire rifles. According to the purists, an assault rifle has to be selective fire. Yet, if you think about it, it’s a little hard to accept the idea that firearms with extended magazines, pistol grip stock, etc. cease to be assault rifles by changing a bit of metal.<sup>20</sup>

Long’s point is well taken because, in fact, military and civilian experts agree that semiautomatic fire is actually *more*—not less—likely to hit the target than is automatic fire, and is thus more deadly.<sup>21</sup> In fact, expert Long wrote about the semiautomatic UZI in another book, “One plus of the semiauto version is that it has a greater potential accuracy....”<sup>22</sup> In any case, a person of moderate skill can fire a semiautomatic assault weapon at an extremely fast rate of fire.<sup>23</sup>

And even if automatic fire were more deadly, many semiautomatic assault weapons not only can be converted to automatic fire with home tools and modest skill, but readily available books and videos walk the would-be converter through the process.

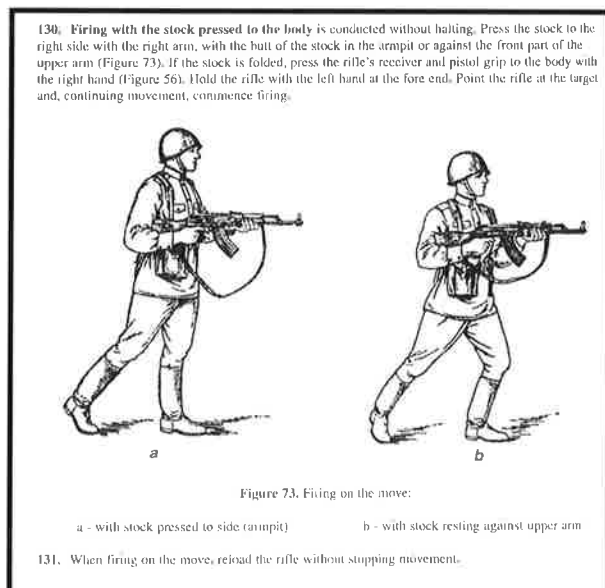
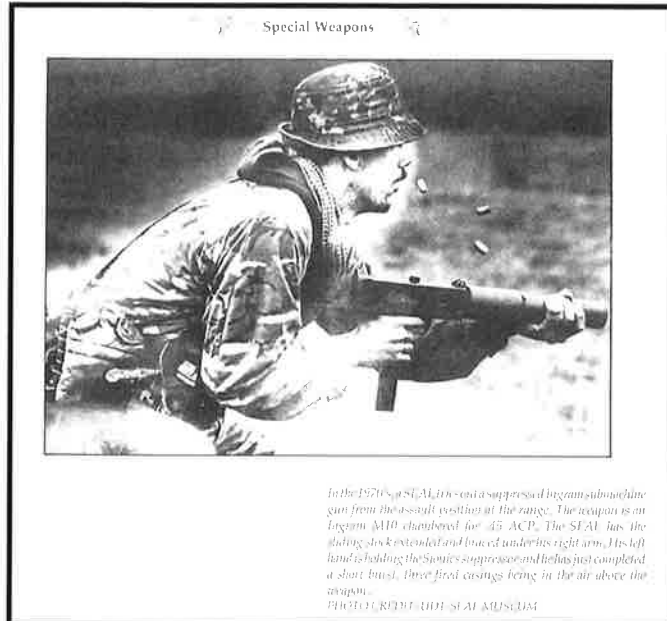


Easily obtained videos and books like these show how to convert semiautomatic assault rifles to fully automatic machine guns (even though semiautomatic fire is more accurate).



***Do assault weapons really encourage “spray firing”?*** Gun industry apologists also disparage the use of such terms as “spray firing” and “shooting from the hip” to describe the deadly capabilities of assault weapons. But, as was explained earlier, “spray and pray” was exactly the point of developing assault weapons. And the following illustrations show graphically how specific assault weapons features allow a “point-and-shoot” grip and help control recoil so the shooter can “hose down” a wide area with a lethal “spray” of bullets.

## “Pray and Spray” Hip-Firing





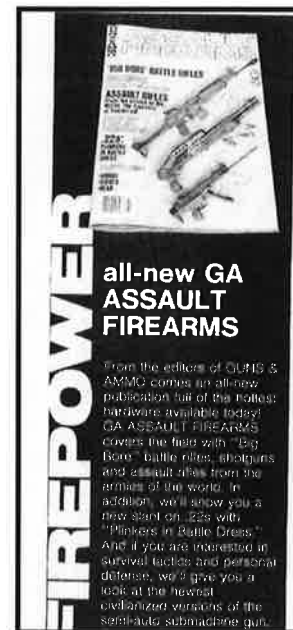
and spray” hip-firing illustrated on the prior page. But the mass murderers, criminal gangs, drug traffickers, and other violent criminals who are drawn to assault weapons are not after marksmanship medals. They want to kill or maim as many people as possible in as short a time as possible—the exact job for which the semiautomatic assault weapon was designed.

***But what about harmless bayonet mounts?*** Unfortunately, the 1994 federal assault weapons ban attempted to define assault weapons on the basis of parts usually associated with military weapons, such as grenade launchers, bayonet mounts, and threaded barrels for adding silencers and flash suppressors (to reduce flash from the weapon’s muzzle at night). The problem is that these features have virtually nothing to do with the functional design of the assault weapon. As a result, gun manufacturers have simply eliminated these “bells and whistles” from their civilian assault weapon designs, while keeping the lethal design factors—high-capacity magazines and pistol grips—that make assault weapons so deadly. These cosmetic changes meet the letter of the federal law, but accomplish little else.

***Don’t gun experts say there is no such thing as a civilian “assault gun?”*** The NRA, the gun industry, the gun press, and other pro-gun “experts” today claim that there is no such thing as a civilian “assault weapon.” But before the guns came under fire, these same experts enthusiastically described exactly these civilian versions as “assault rifles,” “assault pistols,” and “military assault” weapons.

For example, in 1982, *Guns & Ammo* published a book titled *Assault Rifles*, advertising “complete data on the best semi-automatics.”<sup>24</sup> In 1984, *Guns & Ammo* advertised a similar publication, now titled *Assault Firearms* (see ad on right), “full of the hottest hardware available today....covers the field with...assault rifles from the armies of the world....a new slant on .22s with ‘Plinkers in Battle Dress.’ And, if you are interested in survival tactics and personal defense, we’ll give you a look at the newest civilianized versions of the semi-auto submachine gun.”<sup>25</sup>

In 1988, *Guns & Ammo* handgun expert Jan Libourel defined an “assault pistol” simply as, “A high-capacity semi-automatic firearm styled like a submachine gun but having a pistol-length barrel and lacking a buttstock.”<sup>26</sup> This definition handily fit guns like the UZI and Intratec TEC-9 that were regularly advertised on the pages of *Guns & Ammo* during the 1980s as “assault pistols.” A 1989 ad in *Guns & Ammo* for the Intratec TEC-9 (a precursor to the one used in the 1999 Columbine high school shootings) flatly declared that “the TEC-9 series clearly stands out among high capacity 9mm assault-type pistols.”<sup>27</sup>







The gun industry itself deliberately used the military character of semiautomatic “assault weapons” and the lethality-enhancing utility of their distinctive characteristics as selling points. The German company Heckler & Koch, for example, published ads calling their civilian guns “assault rifles” and stressing their military lineage. “The HK 91 Semi-Automatic Assault Rifle from Heckler & Koch...was derived directly from the G3,” a German army weapon, said one full page ad (right).<sup>33</sup> Another described the HK 94 Carbine as “a direct offspring of HK’s renowned family of MP5 submachine guns.”<sup>34</sup> An Intratec ad said the company’s TEC-9 “clearly stands out among high capacity assault-type pistols.”<sup>35</sup> Magnum Research advertised that the Galil rifle system to which it had import rights “outperformed every other assault rifle.”<sup>36</sup>

Early gun magazine reviews of assault guns also specifically noted their limited sporting value. For example, the NRA’s *American Rifleman* reviewed the Calico M-100 rifle in 1987 and concluded, “The M-100 is certainly not a competition gun, hardly a hunting gun, and is difficult to visualize as a personal defense gun.”<sup>37</sup> Similarly, a 1983 *Guns & Ammo* review of the Heckler & Koch HK 94 rifle reported that “you certainly aren’t going to enter any serious, formal matches with it...”<sup>38</sup>

At the same time, the gun industry has actively promoted the intimidating looks of assault weapons to increase their sales. A 1989 *Guns & Ammo* review of the A.A. Arms AP9 praised the appeal of the gun’s “wicked looks” to teenagers, noting “it is one mean-looking dude, considered cool and Ramboish by the teenage crowd....Take a look at one. And let your teen-age son tag along. Ask him what *he* thinks.”<sup>39</sup> (Emphasis in original). *Guns & Ammo* expert Garry James noted in his review of Colt’s 9mm AR-15 rifle that “the intimidation factor of a black, martial-looking carbine pointing in one’s direction cannot be underestimated.”<sup>40</sup> Howard French, of the same magazine, said of the HK 94 9mm Para Carbine that “you would not get much static from an intruder eyeballing its rather lethal appearance.”<sup>41</sup> C.A. Inc. advertisements for the Mark 45 and Mark 9 “Tommy-Gun” style carbines explicitly made the point that a “show of force can be stopping power worth having”<sup>42</sup>

### SUMMING UP

The plain truth is that semiautomatic assault weapons look bad because they are bad. They were designed and developed to meet a specific military goal, which was killing and wounding as many people as possible at relatively short range as quickly as possible, without the need for carefully aimed fire. In short, they are ideal weapons for war, mass killers, drug gangs, and other violent criminals.



TEC-DC9 in use, surveillance tape, Columbine High School.



## Endnotes

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4. Peter R. Senich, *The German Assault Rifle, 1935-1945* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1987): 1.
5. Peter R. Senich, *The German Assault Rifle, 1935-1945* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1987): 1.
6. Chuck Taylor, *The Fighting Rifle: A Complete Study of the Rifle in Combat* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1984), p. 2.
7. Chuck Taylor, *The Fighting Rifle: A Complete Study of the Rifle in Combat* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1984): 2.
8. Ian Hogg, *Jane's Guns Recognition Guide* (Glasgow: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000): 302.
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10. Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three: Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1989): 104.
11. Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three: Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1989): 97.
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13. Chris Bishop (ed.), *Guns in Combat* (Edison, N.J.: Chartwell Books, 1998): 72.
14. Jack Lewis and David E. Steele, *The Gun Digest Book of Assault Weapons*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2000): 75.
15. Tom Diaz, *Making a Killing: The Business of Guns in America* (New York: The New Press, 1999): 73.



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17. Joe Poyer, *The M16/AR15 Rifle: A Shooter's and Collector's Guide* (Tustin, CA: North Cape Publications, 2000): 13.
18. Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three: Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1989): 3-4.
19. Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three: Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1989): 44.
20. Duncan Long, *Assault Pistols, Rifles and Submachine Guns* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1986): 1.
21. See, "How Effective is Automatic Fire?," *American Rifleman*, May 1980, 30.
22. Duncan Long, *The Terrifying Three: Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families* (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1989): 11.
23. See, e.g., "Calico M-100 rifle," *American Rifleman*, January 1987, 60, 61 ("the full 100 rounds were sent downrange in 14 seconds by one flicker-fingered tester").
24. Advertisement, *Guns & Ammo*, July 1982, 20.
25. Advertisement, *Guns & Ammo*, July 1984, 16.
26. "Handgunner's Glossary," *Guns & Ammo*, August 1988, 42.
27. Advertisement, *Guns & Ammo*, January 1989, 77.
28. "Partisan Avenger .45 Assault Pistol," *Guns & Ammo Handgun Annual*, 1989, 26-30.
29. "H&K's 9mm Para Carbine," *Guns & Ammo*, November 1983, 44.
30. "Sites Spectre HC Pistol," *American Rifleman*, December 1990, 58.
31. "Steyr Mannlicher SPP Pistol," *American Rifleman*, August 1993, 70, 72; see also, "Colt's 9mm AR-15," *Guns & Ammo*, July 1985, 35, 76 ("fired from the hip....about as natural a pointer as you can get.")
32. See, e.g., Assault Systems advertisements in *Guns & Ammo*, July 1981, 90 ("assault rifle case"), 92 ("lightweight assault bipod"); *Guns & Ammo*, November 1983, 101 ("assault rifle cases" and "padded Assault Rifle sling"); Beeman advertisement in *Guns & Ammo*, December 1982, 14 ("Beeman Short Scopes: New

for Assault Rifles to Airguns...Use on assault rifles...."); Ventech Inc. advertisement for "Assault Weapon Accessories" in *Guns & Ammo*, February 1991, 96 ("Mini-14...10/22...AR-7").

33. Heckler & Koch advertisement in *Guns & Ammo*, July 1984, 9.
34. Heckler & Koch advertisement in *Guns & Ammo*, June 1984, back cover.
35. Intratec advertisement, *Guns & Ammo*, January 1989, 77.
36. Magnum Research advertisement, *Guns & Ammo*, November 1982, 59. See also, e.g., advertisement by Paragon S&S Inc. for AR 10, *Guns & Ammo*, July 1981, 90 ("Used world wide by military and LAW ENFORCEMENT officers. This famous assault rifle is now available in a semi-auto form!")
37. "Calico M-100 rifle," *American Rifleman*, January 1987, 60, 61.
38. "H&K's 9mm Para Carbine," *Guns & Ammo*, November 1983, 44.
39. "A.A. Arms AP9 Assault Pistol," *Guns & Ammo Handgun Annual*, 1989, 48, 51.
40. "Colt's 9mm AR-15," *Guns & Ammo*, July 1985, 35, 76.
41. "H&K's 9 mm Para Carbine," *Guns & Ammo*, November 1983, 42.
42. CA Inc. advertisement, *Guns & Ammo*, March 1981, 92.

### **About the Violence Policy Center**

The Violence Policy Center (VPC) is a national nonprofit educational organization working to reduce death and injury from firearms. As America's premier think tank on gun policy, the VPC studies current firearms issues and provides information to policymakers, journalists, public health professionals, and grassroots activists.

The virtually unrestricted distribution of firearms is more than a crime problem, it is a national health crisis. Unlike every other consumer product, firearms are exempt from federal health and safety laws. Guns—especially handguns and assault weapons—are inherently dangerous products, and the failure to regulate them like all other products costs thousands of lives and billions of dollars every year. By conducting research on key issues in firearms policy, the VPC counters the gun lobby's distortions and brings hard facts to the debate over firearms death and injury.



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